



Australian Bureau of Statistics

1376.0 - Local Government and ABS (Newsletter), Dec 2006

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 11/01/2007

In this issue:

- **About this newsletter**
- **Review of ABS geography**
- **Historical publications now on ABS website**
- **ABS Training**
- **Recent ABS releases**
- **What's happening in ABS Local Government Finance?**
- **Links to previous editions of Local Government and ABS**
- **Newsletter contact details**

About this newsletter

Local Government and ABS is a quarterly newsletter created by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) aimed at helping the Local Government Sector use statistics to assist with planning and other community servicing decisions.

This is a free newsletter and we encourage you to forward it to others and post it on your bulletin board. Anyone is welcome to receive Local Government and ABS - for further details on how to subscribe see 'Newsletter contact details'.

[Back to top](#)

Review of ABS geography

The ABS has commenced a review of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification that will run from October 2006 to August 2007. The aim of the review is to create a new standard statistical geographical classification that will provide a more relevant spatial framework for the publication and analysis of a wide range of statistics. The review includes all units and structures of the current ASGC between the Mesh Block and state level, except Remoteness.

Local Government is key to the success of the review, both as a major user of regional statistics that will be presented on the basis of the new standard geography and as part of the classification itself. One of the key conceptual issues to be decided by the review will be the position of Local Government Areas in the new classification and how they will relate to the other units. The Australian Local Government Association will be providing input to the review.

The new classification is envisaged as having a three part structure:

1. A core comprising of a new general purpose structure, definitions of rural/urban, major regional centres and remoteness.
2. A set of endorsed structures, outside the core, but under the umbrella of the new standard classification.
3. A set of supported geographies for which the ABS will provide boundaries, concordances and possibly data, but will be outside the standard classification.

The review will develop the criteria to build the core structure and criteria for incorporating endorsed geographies as classification structures. It will also consider the circumstances where the ABS will support some geographies.

The review will occur in four phases:

Phase 1: Development of options, October to early December 2006.

A committee of ABS and external experts will be set up to identify possible options for a new standard statistical geographical classification.

Phase 2: General consultation, January 2006 to mid-April 2007.

The ABS will go to general consultation with all stakeholders to consider the option(s) developed by the committee. This will include consultations in all state and territory capitals by ABS Geography staff. The ABS will give each state/territory government the opportunity to identify a person to coordinate their response.

The expert committee will meet again in April 2006 to consider the feedback on their options, and to select and draft a preferred option.

Phase 3: Focussed consultation, April 2007 to July 2007.

A public information paper on the draft option will be released for discussion. Feedback at this point will be limited to fine tuning the proposal.

The committee will meet a final time in mid July 2007 to consider the feedback and make final recommendations.

Phase 4: Documentation of recommendations, July 2007 to mid August 2007. The committee's recommendations will be documented and presented to ABS senior management for consideration.

[Back to top](#)

Historical publications on ABS website

In November, ABS released a large set of historical publications to the web site.

The set includes all ABS publications, national and regional titles, released during 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997 including the Australia and State Year Books. With the addition of this set, the ABS web site will now hold all ABS publications released from 1994 to the present day.

This new release contains over 4,000 publications which have been converted from older scanned images to pdf files. These historical publications will appear with all current publication pdf files and are treated as past issues.

Note: As a result of these being scanned images, the publications do not necessarily have the same appearance and functionality as later releases.

[Back to top](#)

ABS Training

The ABS website has information on training and learning opportunities provided by the ABS - see the ABS Training page (to find this page, from the Home Page, click on 'Services We Provide' then look for 'ABS Training'). This training includes self-directed learning, and courses offered by the ABS. Each state and territory office of the ABS has a contact number for further information - or just email training@abs.gov.au.

[Back to top](#)

Recent ABS releases

Births, Australia, 2005 (cat. no. 3301.0) and Deaths, Australia, 2005 (cat. no. 3302.0)

These publications both contain data for the years 2000-2005 for Local Government Areas and Statistical Local Areas in Excel spreadsheets (go to the Details tab of both releases to find the Excel files). The Births data includes number of births and Total Fertility Rate. The Deaths data includes number of deaths and Indirect Standardised Death Rate. Both releases contain Estimated Resident Population for the reference years.

Natural Resource Management on Australian Farms, 2004-5 (cat. no. 4620.0)

This publication presents estimates compiled from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' first dedicated Natural

Resource Management (NRM) survey. In developing the NRM survey, five priority topics were identified: native vegetation, weeds, pests, land and soil, and water. The survey asked farmers to identify the extent and type of NRM issues present on their land and the activities they undertook to prevent or manage them. It also asked farmers to identify areas affected and managed within the priority topics, and provide details of the labour and financial costs associated with activities undertaken. Details are provided at the Australian, State and Regional (Natural Heritage Trust 2) levels.

SA Stats, October 2006 (cat. no 1345.4)

October's release included a case study (how to) of using the SuperTABLE data cubes in the National Regional Profiles to compare data across several Local Government Areas.

New South Wales Regional Statistics (cat. no. 1368.1)

Previously available only as a consultancy service, the ABS has recently released New South Wales Regional Statistics (cat. no. 1368.1), a free web-based product providing regional statistics from a wide range of sources. This product provides users with a snapshot of economic and social conditions in their local region and is a useful source of data for Local Government. 2005 data is provided for all Local Government Areas (LGAs) in NSW. The data is presented in excel format, providing flexibility for data manipulation. The product contains tables for a range of topics including population, health, family and community, education, work, economic resources, economic activity, crime and justice, and transport. Detailed explanatory notes and geographic area comparisons are also included.

The ABS will be updating and expanding the product regularly with new data - including both ABS data and data from other sources. The product complements the time series data available in the National Regional Profile and the upcoming release of 2006 Census of Population and Housing data by providing clients with a snapshot of data for all regions across NSW.

For further information contact Allan McLean on (02) 9268 4795, email allan.mclean@abs.gov.au.

[Back to top](#)

What's happening in ABS Local Government Finance?

Collections

Electronic forms for the annual data collection, conducted cooperatively by the ABS and the Department of Local Government and/or Local Government Grants Commission in each state and Northern Territory, have now been dispatched for all jurisdictions. Whilst return dates are different in each state, data for the earlier states have started to be received by the ABS via the Department of Local Government and/or Grants Commission.

The main focus of the Local Government Statistical Unit (LGSU) over the next few months will be processing the data received in time for use in the ABS National Accounts. Given the tight deadlines involved, the LGSU encourages all councils to return their forms to their respective Department of Local Government/Grants Commission at the earliest possible time. To assist in the quality assurance processes the unit performs on the data, the ABS would also encourage all councils to complete the relevant comments section of the form to report any unusual activity which has occurred.

The LGSU has completed the quarterly survey of financial information for the September quarter 2006 cycle. The letters requesting data for December quarter were dispatched on 12 December 2006. The due date for councils to return the completed form is 9 January, 2007. Once again the form will request only a restricted range of data items but seeks a prompt response in order to ensure the financial activity of local government is accurately represented in Australia's National Accounts which are prepared on a quarterly basis. As always ABS personnel are available to assist councils in completing the form in situations where requirements are unclear. LGSU would like to thank all councils for promptly returning their previous quarters form.

The year in review

Achievements include:

- Implementation of the new classifications to further enhance the collection to increase the purpose

splits for Recreation and Culture items.

- Stakeholder visits to Department of Local Government and/or Local Government Grants Commission in each state. We discussed data items collected, form design, sample review, selection rotation policy, provider load and data quality. The purpose of these visits are to foster a strong mutual working relationship whilst ensuring that the survey remains relevant and is responsive to user needs.
- Meeting and exceeding expectations for the delivery of final data for the quarterly collection, partially due to the timely response of councils and the willingness to assist with queries, coupled with the drive and dedication of the unit's staff.

Contacts

Director: Sally Pritchard [sally.pritchard@abs.gov.au] (07) 3222 6310

Assistant Director: Peter Ball [peter.ball@abs.gov.au] (07) 3222 6404

[Back to top](#)

Links to previous issues of Local Government and ABS

Local Government and ABS Issue 15 September 2006

Local Government and ABS Issue 14 July 2006

Local Government and ABS Issue 13 April 2006

Local Government and ABS Issue 12 January 2006

Local Government and ABS Issue 11 September 2005

Local Government and ABS Issue 10 June 2005

Local Government and ABS Issue 9 March 2005

Local Government and ABS Issue 8 December 2004

Local Government and ABS Issue 7 September 2004

Local Government and ABS Issue 6 June 2004

Local Government and ABS Issue 5 March 2004

Local Government and ABS Issue 4 December 2003

Local Government and ABS Issue 3 September 2003

Local Government and ABS Issue 2 June 2003

Local Government and ABS Issue 1 March 2003

[Back to top](#)

Newsletter contact details

This newsletter is one way to help improve communication between the ABS and the Local Government Sector. New ABS initiatives to assist local government organisations will be announced in this newsletter as they evolve. We would like your views and suggestions about this newsletter so that it remains useful and assists you to understand and use ABS statistics. Please email comments to Jeff Ots at Jeff.Ots@abs.gov.au or telephone (08) 8237 7315.

To subscribe: send an email to Jeff Ots with "subscribe Local Government and ABS" in the subject line.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter:

send an email to Jeff Ots with "unsubscribe Local Government and ABS" in the subject line.

To find this newsletter on the ABS Website:

- Select **News and Media** from the main menu at the top or bottom of the screen.
- At the next page choose **ABS Newsletters**.
- Then choose the appropriate edition under **Local Government and ABS**.

[Back to top](#)

This page last updated 10 April 2007



Unless otherwise noted, content on this website is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia Licence together with any terms, conditions and exclusions as set out in the website Copyright notice. For permission to do anything beyond the scope of this licence and copyright terms contact us.